The Philippines: Nationbuilding and Pacification

Brian McAllister Linn, Ph.D.

Some of the ideas in this article grew out of discussions during the 21st Annual Military History Seminar at the University of North Texas in 2003. An earlier version of the article appeared in Armed Diplomacy *(Combat Studies Institute, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, 2003).*

IN AN *Atlantic Monthly* article "Ten Rules for Managing the World," Robert Kaplan lists "Remembering the Philippines" as rule 7. Kaplan emphasizes that among the lessons of the United States' first successful encounter with overseas guerrilla warfare in the Philippines is the importance of soldiers destroying a military resistance. Civic action and nationbuilding are important, even vital, elements of a military occupation and a long peace, but the military defeat of the enemy must come first.

Kaplan also stresses the vital roles military officers, particularly junior and field-grade officers, play. Lacking the means and the inclination to follow a centrally directed, one-size-fits-all counterinsurgency strategy, they structured their own local pacification campaigns. By adjusting to the nature of enemy resistance and geographic and socioeconomic conditions in their areas of operations, the officers developed effective local counterinsurgency policies for what was, essentially, a localized resistance.[1]

Nationbuilding or Benevolent Assimilation?

When historians, if not journalists, assess the lessons of the Philippines for today's peacemakers, they must first define their terms. Today's audiences are familiar with terms such as peace enforcement and nationbuilding that officers a century ago did not use and, in some cases, did not even conceive of as missions.

Whether historians should continue to use archaic, but historically correct, terminology or adapt to current usage is not just academic hairsplitting; it has important ramifications when assessing historical lessons and the utility of history. I am not enamored of the terms nationbuilding, military operations other than war, or peace enforcement, which are politically correct, bureaucratically directed, and so vague that more often than not they cause confusion rather than clarity. In most cases, the terms imperial forces used—savage warfare, pacification, punitive expeditions, chastisement, imperial policing—are far more accurate.

Only by using the most convoluted reasoning can one describe the U.S. military mission in the Philippines as nationbuilding. In 1898, U.S. President William McKinley did not intend to preserve or create a separate Philippine nation. His position, which he maintained in the face of much evidence to the contrary, was that Commodore George Dewey's victory at Manila Bay had effectively shattered Spanish government in the Philippines, rendering it necessary to "send an army of occupation to the Philippines for the twofold purpose of completing the reduction of Spanish power . . . and of giving order and security to the islands while [they were] in the possession of the United States."[2]

McKinley was emphatic that the United States held the Philippines not for its own benefit, but for the good of the Filipinos. American rule would provide them with as much individual freedom, government, education, internal development, and legal protection as they could safely absorb. McKinley perhaps best summed up this policy in December 1898 as "benevolent assimilation, substituting the mild sway of justice and right for arbitrary rule."[3] Within this context, McKinley saw the Army's mission as one of occupying the rest of the archipelago "to protect the natives in their homes, in their employments, and in their personal and religious rights."

Some argue that implicit in McKinley's rhetoric was the promise that if the Filipinos demonstrated their fitness for self-government, they would be freed of American tutelage. But such a time was a long way off. From the beginning, the McKinley Administration denied the archipelago the territorial status accorded to Hawaii and Puerto Rico and made it clear that "between the people of the ceded islands and the United States the former are subject to the

US Army

The Manila Fire Department displays its new equipment outside a U.S. Army headquarters building, 1899.

complete sovereignty of the latter."[4] To McKinley, the Philippines were essentially a colony, not a nation in the making.[5]

The U.S. Army officer corps' views reflected those of U.S. political leaders. Most officers, including a minority who opposed annexation, held paternalistic and racist views inimical to nationbuilding.[6] Indeed, to these officers, the numerous civic projects; the construction of schools, roads, and markets; and the suppression of banditry, slavery, and violence were justified because the "natives" were unfit to rule themselves and would continue to be so for the foreseeable future.[7] Numerous parallels Army officers drew between their service against Native Americans and the inhabitants of the Philippines, particularly the Moros, are further evidence of the Army's view of its mission.

Army officers like Major Hugh Lenox Scott, Military Governor of the Sulu Archipelago, who had extensive civil and military experience with Indians and Moros, argued that both were "children of the world," requiring "paternal forbearance."[8] Scott felt his task was not to create a nation, but to serve as "preceptor to those whom, from the point of view of civilized mankind, our government regarded as less advanced than we." Scott served with great distinction for 3 years as governor in the Sulu Archipelago and worked, at considerable cost to his health, to bring social, political, and economic benefits to the Moros. But, when a new professional opportunity arose, he had no qualms in leaving, for, as he said, "I was not a missionary, but a soldier."[9]

The term nationbuilding is inadequate to describe American military policy in the Philippines, but we must exercise caution in substituting the term benevolent assimilation, although benevolent assimilation was one of the pillars of U.S. military policy in the Philippines and, in some regions, perhaps the most important single aspect of the U.S. occupation.

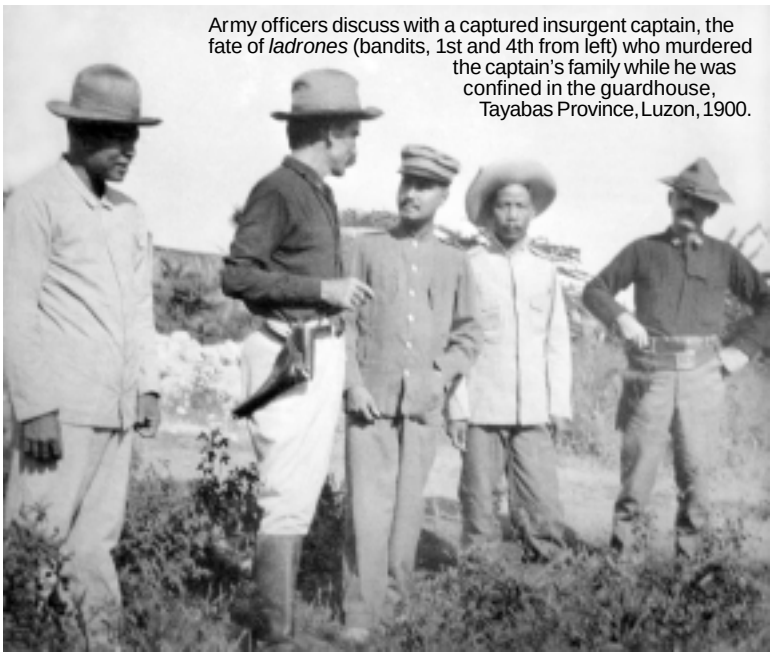
The U.S. Army rapidly turned Manila, one of the pestholes of Asia, into a model city. Millions of dollars and man-hours were expended dredging Manila's harbor; hiring crews to clean the streets; flushing out sewers and canals; building roads; and instituting a host of other civic reforms. Between July 1899 and June 1900, the Board of Health vaccinated 114,000 Filipinos for smallpox, contained an outbreak of bubonic plague, and cut the death rate by disease from 1,090 in November 1899 to 599 in June 1900.[10]

Emphasis on civic action continued as the Army expanded into Luzon's countryside and other islands. Wherever military garrisons were stationed, soldiers built schools, roads, and health clinics, and trained police forces. These were tangible signs of American Progressivism.

Benevolent assimilation was also evident in the perception and treatment of Filipino civilians. According to McKinley, Americans should act in such a manner "that our flag may be no less beloved in the mountains of Luzon and the fertile zones of Mindanao and Negros than it is at home, that there as here it shall be the revered symbol of liberty, enlightenment, and progress in every avenue of development."[11]

After fighting broke out on 4 February 1899, McKinley insisted that armed resistance was caused by a combination of ignorance and the "sinister ambition of a few leaders of the Filipinos," telling

US Army



Army officers discuss with a captured insurgent captain, the fate of *ladrones* (bandits, 1st and 4th from left) who murdered the captain's family while he was confined in the guardhouse, Tayabas Province, Luzon, 1900.

Congress: "We are not waging war against the inhabitants of the Philippine Islands. A portion of them are making war against the United States. By far the greater part of the inhabitants recognize American sovereignty and welcome it as a guarantee of order and of security for life, property, freedom of conscience, and the pursuit of happiness. To them full protection will be given. They shall not be abandoned. We will not leave the destiny of the loyal millions in the islands to the disloyal thousands who are in rebellion against the United States."[12]

In this and other declarations, McKinley made it clear that uplifting and protecting the civilian population were central to the Army's mission. But, he was equally clear that the United States had an absolute right to direct the future of the Philippines; there would be no compromise with those who opposed U.S. authority.

Superseding establishment of a colonial government or instituting social reform, McKinley ordered that military government "be extended with all possible dispatch to the whole of the ceded territory."[13] His directive imposed a timetable on U.S. forces that contradicted his claim that armed resistance to American authority would soon collapse as a result of internal contradictions.

The order to extend military control and McKinley's refusal to recognize the legitimacy of Philippine President Emilio Aguinaldo's government contributed to the outbreak of fighting on 4 February 1899 and greatly influenced military strategy. For example, in early 1899, despite his wish to concentrate on military objectives in central Luzon (that is, Aguinaldo's army), the commanding general in the Philippines, Major General Elwell S. Otis, had to dispatch troops to subsidiary theaters such as Negros, Mindanao, Panay, and the Sulu Archipelago. And, correctly or not, Otis remained convinced Aguinaldo's army was the center of gravity, but he also had to fulfill McKinley's orders to provide government, stability, and protection to the inhabitants.

In December 1899, after U.S. forces destroyed Aguinaldo's army, the need to extend military government became more paramount. The number of U.S. garrisons increased from 53 in November 1899 to over 400 a year later. Otis's successor, Army Major General Arthur MacArthur, accused Otis of squandering manpower and failing to concentrate sufficient forces to secure decisive results, even though Otis had increased the number of garrisons by almost a hundred.

Only with great difficulty can we define the Army's mission as nationbuilding, which is not to say that some aspects of the Army's mission did not involve similar tasks—restoring law and order for example. Restoring law and order occurred on various levels, from Otis drawing up a new legal code for the archipelago to the individual garrison commanders establishing police forces; providing security for merchants and public officials; and suppressing bandits, religious sects, and guerrillas.

Army officers were deeply involved in restoring the Philippine economy and establishing markets, encouraging investment, removing oppressive tariffs, and opening up trade. In the process, they often ran into strong opposition from colleagues who sought to use economic warfare as a tool to crush resistance. Moreover, many of these efforts (in education, in government, and in diminishing the influence of the Church, in establishing a functioning bureaucracy and an independent judiciary) were essential steps in creating a Philippine state.

The Philippine experience provides important practical lessons about nationbuilding that today's officers should study, but at a fundamental level, the U.S. military in the Philippines was not engaged in nationbuilding because that was not what it was ordered to do. Neither McKinley, his subordinate senior commanders, nor the officers charged with enforcing government policy in the archipelago envisioned an independent Philippine nation emerging from their efforts.

The Nature of the War

If U.S. officers wish to follow Kaplan's admonition to "Remember the Philippines," they must understand the nature of the war that occurred there. Current U.S. academic orthodoxy, promulgated in textbooks, journals, and television documentaries, holds that the war was little more than an exercise in racism, cruelty, and perhaps even genocide.[14] Philippine nationalist scholars present an equally distorted view of revolutionaries rising up in arms against imperialists and collaborationist plutocrats. To appreciate the war and to draw effective lessons from it, we must understand the nature of the insurgent challenge and U.S. pacification.

A Gatlin gun crew of the 30th Infantry in Culi-Culi, outer Manila, 1899.

US Army

The insurgent challenge. Because benevolent assimilation placed a premium on Filipino cooperation, it was incumbent on the insurgents to prevent such collaboration and impose their own control on the population. In many respects, this was but an extension to the entire archipelago of policies and methods Americans had already practiced in the small area of American control in 1899.

As the Americans moved into the provinces, local guerrilla commanders issued proclamations that emphasized the duty of all Filipinos to resist the invaders and declared that anyone who helped the enemy was a traitor subject to the most severe punishment. The insurgents learned that terror was a potent counterargument to what they termed the Americans' "policy of attraction." Indeed, within 4 days of the outbreak of war, they executed the mayor of a Manila suburb who attempted to surrender to the United States.[15]

The guerrillas singled out collaborators' property for destruction, although often the destruction of private property was indiscriminate and intended to intimidate entire communities as much as to punish individuals. As the Americans occupied more and more towns, public attacks on collaborators became more common, and the reported burnings, kidnappings, tortures, and killings eventually numbered in the hundreds, with thousands of incidents unreported.[16]

Shadow governments. From the beginning, the revolutionaries and insurgents sought to deny the Americans the means to implement local government. In some areas, the revolutionaries created shadow governments to collect taxes, enforce the law, and provide social services to supporters. Some Filipinos held positions with insurgent governments as well as with the American Government. They cooperated wholeheartedly with the occupiers in social reforms such as sanitation, schools, and roads, while at the same time punishing collaborators and raising taxes to support local guerrilla forces.[17] Despite the fact that Americans were convinced that virtually every Filipino officeholder was playing a double game, a number of factors inhibited the establishment of shadow governments, chief of which was the lack of central direction—or, all too often, any direction—over the resistance.

From December 1899 on, Aguinaldo remained a fugitive who had little control over or communication with his subordinates on Luzon or with the even more decentralized resistance movements in the rest of the archipelago. As a result, no one oversaw and coordinated the actions of the local revolutionary governments. Aguinaldo and his supporters were slow to recognize their potential and pursued instead a policy of strict noncompliance with the occupiers. All civic officials were expected to refuse to serve in American-controlled governments; indeed, all contact between the Filipino population and the Americans was discouraged. Many insurgent commanders issued proclamations declaring that all towns that accepted U.S. rule would be destroyed and their populations killed. In some areas, this even took the form of depopulating towns and removing their inhabitants to "safe" districts. Although these measures achieved some temporary success, in the long run they greatly helped the Americans.

Unable to survive in the countryside, refugees drifted back to their ancestral homes and fell under

US Army

Insurgents march during surrender ceremonies at Santa Cruz, Laguna Province, 1901.

U.S. authority. In part because of insurgent attacks, they soon found their lives depended on cooperation with the military. The elites who were the core of insurgent leadership soon found that life in the boondocks was physically debilitating and kept them separated from their businesses and families. As the Americans increased pressure against them through confiscation, fines, and arrests, they found their policy of noncompliance harder and harder to sustain.

Because of the fractious, even fratricidal, nature of local resistance movements, local government officials were often caught between the forces of rival guerrilla chiefs. In one province, for example, a local commander protested that his rivals were undercutting his efforts to establish shadow governments by murdering anyone who took civic office.[18] And, the shadow governments were extremely vulnerable. One informant, one captured document, one botched entry in the civic accounts, one suspicious incident could alert the military garrison. This vulnerability greatly increased over time, especially after it became clear the Americans were winning, and the number of Filipinos with a vested interest in the new colonial government increased.

American pacification. Like the Filipino resistance, American pacification or counterinsurgency was essentially regional. But unlike Filipino resistance, it always had an element of centralized control and direction by Army and Navy headquarters in Manila. American military strategy in 1899 was to eliminate Filipino conventional forces and, while defeating those forces, establish military government, suppress armed resistance, and pacify (that is, impose control, law, and order over) the population. Doing so required more than just occupying the major cities; it required taking the war into the boondocks.

Importance of local commanders. The Philippine War overwhelmingly confirms the absolute necessity of having officers of character, initiative, and humanity in counterinsurgency operations. From Manila, the U.S. high command promulgated policies, but the officers who dealt with the population daily were key to their implementation. Indeed, as one observer concluded, "It is a fact that the disposition of nearly every town in the archipelago depends upon the officer or officers who have been commanding in that town."[19] Hundreds of small garrisons—scattered, isolated, and surrounded by a hostile or apathetic populace—had to establish order in their immediate neighborhoods.

The garrison commanders led patrols into the mountains and jungles, fought the guerrillas, and rooted out shadow governments in their towns. On their own initiative, they raised and armed irregulars; established working relations with local political figures; negotiated surrenders with guerrilla chiefs; built intelligence networks; and constructed roads, schools, and dispensaries. To villagers and guerrillas, they came to represent the United States and its promise of honest, effective, progressive government. In a war that was fought essentially by local forces for local control, the garrison commander's role was crucial to securing an American victory.

Garrisoning. U.S. pacification in the 1900s was based as much on the occupation of hostile territory

U.S. volunteers occupy a rice paddy dike during operations against insurgents, 1899.

US Army

as on active field operations. Ultimately, U.S. troops occupied over 600 towns. In the process, the Army became deeply embedded within Philippine society.

With few exceptions, companies were stationed at one or two posts during their entire 12- to 16-month tours of duty; regiments were stationed in only one or two provinces; and brigadier generals commanded only one military district. This structure led to a number of important results. Soldiers became familiar with the terrain and learned to move efficiently through such natural obstacles as hemp, jungle, swamp, mountains, and rivers. They learned where guerrilla hideouts were; where the best sites for ambushes or observation stations were; and how the seasons affected the roads. Over time, soldiers learned the best methods of patrolling in their areas and the best formations for preventing ambushes, surrounding villages, and attacking guerrilla camps.

Long service in one garrison area provided soldiers with extensive local contacts with the population, which enabled them to learn enough of the language to communicate; develop a network of spies and guides; and augment their meager manpower with Filipino paramilitaries such as police, armed guards, and local militia. Local officers implemented reforms that appealed to the people in their areas. In some places, it might be a road network that allowed farmers to bring their produce to markets. In others, it might be the suppression of bandits and sects or the removal of corrupt and oppressive officials.

Civil and military duties. In contrast to today's Army, which makes clear distinctions between warfighting and other missions, the Army of 1900 had extensive duties in civil administration. Until July 1901, the Army's commanding general was also the governor of the Philippines. This dual command extended downward to colonels, who served as regimental commanders and provincial governors, and to captains and lieutenants, who led their troops in the field while also serving as town mayors, customs officials, police chiefs, tax collectors, civil judges, chief engineers, and sanitation inspectors.

The U.S. Army in the Philippines made such transitions smoothly and quickly. Soldiers did not complain that such duty was not their real mission or that constabulary duty was destroying their combat effectiveness. Soldiers hunted guerrillas but continued to teach school; build roads; provide medicine and treatment; ensure religious toleration; and in other ways, demonstrate the benefits of colonial rule.

The Army sought to avoid actions that would alienate either Americans or Filipinos. Most Army officers were highly effective civil administrators. They were honest, could handle paperwork and detail, and made timely decisions. Many had surprisingly good people skills. There is no reason to doubt the sincerity of the popular testimonials that many officers garnered from the local population.

The Americans might not have liked the Filipinos, viewing them as racial inferiors, but that did not prevent soldiers from doing a great deal of good. Many

soldiers saw no contradiction between detesting the Filipinos as a people and liking them as individuals. The soldiers advocated strong measures against guerrillas and protested any imposition of the same measures on "their" townspeople. The U.S. victory in the Philippines depended a great deal on the willingness of a sufficient number of officers to accept civil responsibilities as an essential part of pacification.

Coercion. However great their emotional satisfaction with building schools and eliminating sickness, American officers recognized that "the military objective, the defeat of the guerrillas, was the most essential of their tasks."[20] Because the guerrillas used the population as a source for logistics, information, manpower, and shelter, the Americans were soon driven to punish individuals and communities. U.S. soldiers destroyed crops, farms, boats, and livestock in areas suspected of aiding guerrillas, and they exacted what one officer termed "most just retribution and retaliation" for attacks on American troops.[21] Such destruction grew in frequency and scope, and while these sanctions were justified under military law, they also reflected the conviction among many officers that "the judicious application of the torch is the most humane way of waging such a war."[22]

The level of retaliation depended on officers' perceptions of the guerrilla forces' strength and popular support. One officer in a province widely, if mistakenly, believed to be pacified wrote to his wife: "I have never burnt a house yet or cut a tree, or whipped a native or hung one, and I don't intend to. If we can't conquer these savages without resorting to Spanish methods, my notion is that we had much better quit these islands, and let them have them."[23]

On Panay, for much of 1900, there appears to have been an effort to restrict punishment only to the guilty.[24] In southeastern Luzon, an area where the level of resistance was perhaps the greatest in the archipelago, there was far more support for retaliation. As early as February 1900, the district commander ordered that "communities that harbor criminals and permit them to operate against the United States will have to suffer in some way for the acts of the criminals themselves."[25] Despite some protest, most officers in the area appear to have accepted this principle of collective responsibility. One officer said of an especially recalcitrant area that "it will be extremely difficult to control that section of the district except by burning all the towns where insurgents are harbored, thereby compelling people to come into the towns during the wet season."[26] Another officer, directing a sweep through the countryside, commented, "My suggestion is to burn freely and kill every man who runs."[27] By 1901, one patrol burned 180,000 pounds of rice and 60,000 pounds of corn in slightly more than a week.[28] Such measures imposed great hardships on both guerrillas and noncombatants, but they proved essential in shattering guerrilla resistance and winning popular acceptance—however grudging—of U.S. rule.

Joint operations. The geography of the Philippine archipelago forced the Army and Navy to collaborate on amphibious operations. After a rocky start, largely caused by the egos of respective senior commanders, the services cooperated quite well. The Navy, which blockaded all unoccupied ports, effectively ending inter-island trade and preventing the rebels from communicating with each other or receiving outside support, was key in making the Philippine War a series of regional struggles and not a national revolution. The Navy also gave the Americans the ability to land and strike all along the coast. One such operation captured Aguinaldo.

Innovation and adaptation. The Army went to war with tactics designed for European battlefields that proved well suited for fighting in jungles, mountains, and rice paddies. The Army adapted these tactics to local conditions. In one province, the threat might be small groups of snipers who kept up a constant harassing fire on occupied towns; in another, it might be primitive headhunters; in a third, it could be hordes of machete-wielding religious fanatics; in a fourth, it might be Muslim tribesmen fighting from behind the walls of stone fortresses and practicing ritual suicide. With only a few exceptions, U.S. flexibility, small-unit cohesion, and leadership from the front by officers and noncommissioned officers (NCOs) proved sufficient to overcome these varied challenges.

Intelligence. Often it is said that in low-intensity conflicts intelligence is the most important asset, but the Army's effort in the Philippines was quite uneven: intelligence services were small—usually one or two officers and a few translators—and their duties unclear. The high command—especially Otis—was slow to establish a more efficient or accurate system.

For most of his information, Otis relied on upper-class Filipino collaborators who tended to tell him what he wanted to hear—that the Filipino people desired U.S. rule and that only a small group of warlords, brigands, and terrorists were opposed to it. Otis passed this misinformation on to McKinley. Arthur MacArthur, who took over as commanding general in May 1900, had a far better grasp of the need for intelligence; nevertheless, not until 13 December 1900 was intelligence reorganized under the Division of Military Information, which was charged with translating documents and relaying vital information promptly to field units. The most productive

Army intelligence came from the local town and provincial officers.

Because the benevolent-assimilation policy placed so much emphasis on civil affairs, post commanders were required to collect an impressive amount of data on local conditions that often had great military value. Thus, in creating civil governments or police forces; in auditing town finances; or in making alliances with town councilors or clergy, officers often were able to destroy shadow governments, arrest guerrillas posing as "amigos," and secure hidden weapons.[29]

Logistics. One of the great strengths of the U.S. Army in the Philippine War was that it could put the bulk of its forces into combat infantry units, not into logistics and other support. Logistics were quite primitive by our standards and were often appallingly bad. Thousands of troops were sent home as invalids, many of whom subsequently died, because of the Army's outright incompetence and inability to provide decent food, shelter, and medicine. Nonetheless, the Americans could do what their opponents could not—sustain troops in the field. Indeed, Filipino guerrillas who avoided military defeat often surrendered because of starvation and disease. Moreover, primitive logistics enabled the Army to put roughly 60 to 70 percent of its manpower into its combat formations. By comparison, in Vietnam, the Army required nine service troops to support one combat infantryman.

Filipino auxiliaries. Throughout the Philippine War, U.S. military forces were terribly undermanned. At their peak, U.S. forces numbered 70,000 and usually totaled no more than 45,000. Because of Army accounting practices, transfers, detached duty, and sickness, the average rifle strength of Army forces was about 26,000—and this to occupy, pacify, and administer nearly 8 million Filipinos. From the beginning, the Americans relied on Filipinos for help, first with logistics (employing over 100,000 Filipinos in 1899 alone), then as scouts and police, and finally, as armed units.

The American military was able to enlist Filipino auxiliaries in a number of ways. Many Filipinos opposed the Philippine Republic and nationalist or regional revolutionary leadership on tribal, religious, or personal grounds. The Philippine Scouts were originally irregular warriors raised from the town of Macabebe for service against guerrillas in the swamps of Luzon. Having served the Spanish for decades, the Macabebes were brutally persecuted by Aguinaldo's predominantly Tagalog supporters when the latter took over Pampanga Province.

On Samar, the Americans raised a scout unit from among hemp merchant families who were losing economic and political power as a result of insurgent exactions. By the war's end, over 15,000 Filipinos served in officially recognized Scout or constabulary units and did quite well under American officers, so much so that by 1905, with the exception of the Moro provinces, locally raised forces carried out the bulk of military operations in the archipelago.

Occasionally, in direct violation of orders from Manila, local officers also raised a number of secret paramilitary units. A combination of revenge, religious zeal, and self-preservation prompted sectarians of the *Guardia de Honor* to join the Americans against anti-clerical revolutionaries in La Union Province. In western Mindanao, local Muslim chiefs viewed the Catholics in the revolutionary forces with hatred born of centuries of warfare and did such a good job of suppressing them Americans faced little armed resistance.

In many towns, officers solicited help from landowners, businessmen, or political figures abused by local guerrillas. These elites raised militias that freed U.S. forces from town security duties and joined garrison soldiers to hunt guerrillas in the boondocks. Town police forces, much maligned in some areas, proved efficient counterinsurgency forces in others. As in many successful U.S. counterinsurgencies, the ability of local officers to adapt, adjust, and innovate was what often determined whether local forces played significant roles in pacification.

Lessons Learned

Kaplan is correct in asserting that today's military officers should "Remember the Philippines." American pacification of the archipelago offers a treasure trove of lessons on counterinsurgency procedures and is an unsurpassed case study of the dynamics of non-Marxist agrarian regional insurgency. Thus, at all levels, from the creation and implementation of broad civil-military policies to the vital role played by civil-military projects to the utilitarian techniques of bush warfare, the war in the Philippines teaches a great deal. But, there is a reason the Philippine experience has been ignored by virtually all U.S. officers for over a century. The war was complex and confusing and defies conventional military analysis. Officers must truly think outside the box and be willing to engage in intensive study and self-reflection to learn the lessons from the conflict.

The Philippine experience does not fit easily into conventional frameworks of nationbuilding or military operations other than war, and efforts to do so will probably lead to conclusions that will be so simplified as to be either useless or dangerous. These disclaimers aside, a study of the Philippine War can teach today's officers five essential lessons. First, there is the absolutely vital lesson that guerrillas are not invulnerable. They are often disunited and divided; they have a great deal of difficulty in

sustaining continued popular support; their leaders are often militarily and politically inept; and time is often on the side of the occupying forces.

A second lesson is that in a war that is essentially a struggle over local control, the role of the local commander—whether insurgent or American—is crucial. In addition to the importance of an early and constant integration of civil and military duties, it is crucial to recognize the importance of local issues. Senior leaders get all the attention, but in the long run, they might be far less important to the history of Iraq than the dozens of officers administering local governments and putting together a new, democratic nation.

A third lesson concerns the unavoidable necessity of controlling punitive or retaliatory policies. Quite frankly, it is either naive or dishonest to pretend soldiers will continue to take casualties without responding or in some way retaliating. The likelihood is that such retaliation will increase over time. Punitive measures have always been part of U.S. counterinsurgency operations, and U.S. commanders and their opponents have often described them as highly effective.

A fourth lesson stresses the need for local auxiliaries, even if it means embracing rather unsavory allies. We need more Macabebe Scouts, and we have to be willing to accept the fact that their behavior will sometimes be motivated by revenge, tribal vendettas, or bad character.

Finally, as an institution, the U.S. Army must study guerrilla, revolutionary, insurgent, and unconventional warfare. The Army's distaste for professional education in anything other than large-scale conventional conflicts has been a part of its culture for centuries. Ironically, over the last decade, while the Army has focused on future warfare and peacekeeping, Marine Corps students at the School of Advanced Warfighting have been studying the Army's most successful counterinsurgency campaigns.

Praising the initiative, common sense, and pragmatism U.S. soldiers have demonstrated in recent nationbuilding and pacification operations is appropriate, but it is worth asking whether they might have done even better if they had been helped by a stronger institutional commitment and more professional education. If and when the Army decides to focus on the "small war" duties it is actually performing, rather than on the hypothetical "big war" it spends so much time preparing for, it would do well to heed Kaplan's advice: "Remember the Philippines." ***MR***

NOTES

1. Robert Kaplan, "Supremacy by Stealth: Ten Rules for Managing the World," *Atlantic Monthly* (July-August 2003): 80.
2. William McKinley to Wesley Merritt, 19 May 1898, U.S. Army Adjutant General's Office, *Correspondence Relating to the War with Spain . . . April 15, 1898 to July 4, 1902*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC: 1902, Center of Military History, reprint 1993), 2:676. Hereafter cited as *CWS*.
3. McKinley to Secretary of War [Russell A. Alger], 21 December 1898, in Henry C. Corbin to Elwell S. Otis, 21 December 1898, *CWS*, 2: 858-59.
4. *Annual Report of the War Department*, 1899, 1, 24. Hereafter cited as *RWD*.
5. Ultimately, the United States governed the Philippines as an "insular possession."
6. For a sample of the diverse opinions among soldiers who opposed U.S. annexation of the Philippines, see Joseph I. Markey, *From Iowa to the Philippines: A History of Company M, Fifty-First Iowa Volunteers* (Red Oak, IA: Thos. D. Murphy Co., 1900), 184; James Parker, "The Philippine Campaign" (no date), Box 28, Clarence Edwards Papers, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston; "Memoir," John Henry Parker Papers, Archives, U.S. Military Academy Library, West Point, NY; H. Roger Grant, "Letters From the Philippines: The 51st Iowa Volunteers at War, 1898-1899," *Palimpsest* (November-December 1974): 174-75. According to one author, there were "numerous oblique references" against expansionism in military writings. See James L. Abrahamson, *America Arms for a New Century: The Making of a Great Military Power* (New York: Free Press, 1981), 76.
7. For a sample of Army views on the unfitness of Filipinos for self-government, see J. Franklin Bell to Henry C. Corbin, 17 May 1902, Box 1, Henry C. Corbin Papers, Manuscripts Division, Library of Congress [hereafter MDLC]; P.S. McGovern, "The Philippines: Let us take them out of the Political Foot-ball Arena," Command and General Staff School (CGSS) Individual Research Paper, 1930, Combined Arms Research Library, Fort Leavenworth, KS; "Notes on the Philippines," Box 20, Matthew F. Steele Papers, Military History Institute, Carlisle, PA [hereafter MHI]; Leonard Wood to Theodore Roosevelt, 18 November 1906, Box 37, Leonard Wood Papers, MDLC; Raymond E. Lee, "The Philippine Defense Problem," 1 March 1927, Study for Army War College (AWC) Course, AWC 1926-27, File 235-82, MHI.
8. Hugh Lenox Scott, *Some Memories of a Soldier* (New York: Century Co., 1928), 461. On parallels between the Philippines and the Western frontier, see Brian McAllister Linn, "The Long Twilight of the Frontier Army," *Western Historical Quarterly* 27 (Summer 1996): 141-67.
9. Ibid, 400.
10. Guy L. Edie to AAG [Ast. Adjutant General (AG)], Provost-Marshal-General, 31 July 1900, *RWD* 1900 1, 10:283-88; John M. Gates, *Schoolbooks and Krags: The United States Army in the Philippines, 1899-1902* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1975), 57-63.
11. McKinley, "To the Senate and House of Representatives," 3 December 1900, in James L. Richardson, ed., *Compilation of the Messages and Papers of the Presidents* (New York: Bureau of National Literature, 1897-1922), 10:222.
12. McKinley, "Second Inaugural Address," 4 March 1901, in Richardson, 10:244.
13. McKinley to Alger.
14. For a critique of current interpretations of the war, see Linn, "Taking Up the White Man's Burden," in Luis E. Gonzales-Vales, ed., *1898: Enfoques y Perspectivas* [Focus and perspective] (San Juan: Academia Puertorriqueña de la Historia, 1997), 111-42.
15. John M. Stotsenburg to AG, 2d Brig., 8 February 1899, Box 2, Entry 764, Record Group [hereafter RG] 395, National Archives, Washington, D.C. Hereafter all RG citations refer to National Archives collections.
16. For a summation of some of the worst atrocities, see U.S. Senate, *Affairs in the Philippine Islands: Hearings Before the Committee on the Philippines of the United States Senate*, 57th Congress, 1st Sess., Doct. No. 331, April 1902, 993-1,376.
17. For examples of such shadow governments, see William Tutherly to AG, 21 February 1901, Letter Sent 201, Companies A-F, Letter Sent Book, 26th Infantry, Entry 117, RG 94; Edgar Z. Steever to commanding officer (CO), Vigan, 20 July 1900, Letter Received 1286, Entry 5583, RG 395; J.M. Thompson to AG, Department of Northern Luzon, 4 January 1901, Letter Sent 62, Entry 2312, RG 395.
18. Buenaventura Dimaguila to Mariano Trias, 30 November 1900, Exhibit 1125, in John R.M. Taylor, *The Philippine Insurrection Against the United States, 1898-1903: A Compilation of Documents and Introduction* (Pasay City, PI.: The Eugenio Lopez Foundation, 1906, Reprint 1971), 5, 281-88.
19. Henry T. Allen to [John A. Johnston?], 21 January 1902, Box 7, Henry T. Allen Papers, MDLC. For similar sentiments, see Dean C. Worcester to Mrs. Henry W. Lawton, 5 May 1901, Box 2, Henry W. Lawton Papers, MDLC.
20. Linn, *The U.S. Army and Counterinsurgency in the Philippine War, 1899-1902* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1989), 170.
21. Charles J. Crane, *The Experiences of a Colonel of Infantry* (New York: Knickerbocker Press, 1923), 340.
22. Samuel B.M. Young, "Our Soldiers in the Philippines," 13 November 1902, Box B, Samuel B.M. Young Papers, MHI.
23. Matthew F. Steele to Stella, 15 August 1900, Box 7, Steele Papers.
24. A.A. Barker to Ast. AG, Department of Visayas, 16 September 1900, and Edward D. Anderson to AG, Department of Visayas, 7 June 1900, both in 26th Infantry Regimental Letters Sent Book, Entry 117, RG 94; Walter H. Gordon to AG, 15 May 1900, enclosed in Walter Henry Gordon, 3927 ACP 1886, RG 94.
25. Ast. AG to Commanding General, 2d Brigade, 2d Division, 5 February 1900, Entry 4330, RG 395.
26. Benjamin F. Cheatham to AG, 2d District, Department of Southern Luzon, 29 May 1900, Letter Sent 192, 37th Infantry Letters Sent Book, Entry 117, RG 94.
27. William Carey Brown Papers, Diary, 2 June 1900, MHI.
28. On the campaign in this area, see Linn, *U.S. Army*, 119-61.
29. Linn, "Intelligence and Low-Intensity Conflict in the Philippine War, 1899-1902," *Intelligence and National Security* 6 (January 1991): 90-114.

Brian McAllister Linn is a Professor of History at Texas A&M University and a Fellow at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars. He received a B.A. from the University of Hawaii and an M.A. and Ph.D. from The Ohio State University. He is the author of The Philippine War, 1899-1902 *(Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2000) and* Guardians of Empire: The U.S. Army and the Pacific, 1902-1940 *(Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997). He is currently at work on a book about the American way of war.*